



## Editorial

### **Norman Goldstein MD Editor, Hawaii Medical Journal**

This month begins a series of special issues on "Alternative Medicine." The Straub Foundation sponsored several seminars for physicians, other health providers and the public.

Integrative Medicine: Research in Hawaii during September 2000 at the Hilton Hawaiian Village.

Complementary and Alternative Medicine: Practical Applications and Evaluations on the Island of Kauai during October 2000.

Healing in Paradise: Integrating Alternatives in Health, a public program presented at the Hawaii Convention Center during November 2000.

The Hawaii Medical Journal is publishing these proceedings in collaboration with the Straub Foundation. The manuscripts will continue in next month's Journal.

As testament to the interest in Complementary and Alternative Medicine, the University of Hawaii School of Medicine is planning to start a CAM Department. Thanks to Dean Ed Cadman for his suggestion to implement the first CAM Department in U.S. medical school.

The Hawaii Medical Library subscribes to the Journal of Alternative and Complementary Medicine and several excellent general texts on CAM, listed below.

The Arthritis Foundation has a Guide to Alternative Therapy with nearly 90 different types of treatments and therapies ([www.arthritis.org](http://www.arthritis.org)). Volume III of the Physicians Guide to Alternative Medicine has just been published by American Health Consultants of Atlanta, GA ([www.ahcpub.com](http://www.ahcpub.com)).

Changes are occurring rapidly in medicine today through the World Wide Web; telemedicine; imaging techniques; artificial organs, cloning; and stem cell research among others. As physicians, we must be alert to modern technology as well as alternative medicine. For better or worse, forty percent of our patients are now using some form of CAM. Being current with these developments is increasingly important.

COHEN, MICHAEL H. *Complementary & Alternative Medicine: Legal Boundaries and Regulatory Perspectives*. Baltimore, MD.: John Hopkins University Press, c1998. WB 890 C678c 1998

FONTANAROSA, PHIL B., ED. *Alternative Medicine: An Objective Assessment (JAMA and Archives Journals)*. Chicago, Ill.: American Medical Association, c2000. WB 890 A4665 2000

FREEMAN, LYN W., AND LAWLIS, G. FRANK., EDS. *Mosby's Complementary & Alternative Medicine: A Research-Based Approach*. St. Louis, MO.: Mosby, c2001. WB 890 F855m 2001

GORDON, RENA J. [and others]. *Alternative Therapies: Expanding Options in Health Care*. New York, NY: Springer Pub. Co., c1998. WB 890 A4662 1998.

JONAS, WAYNE B., AND LEVIN, JEFFREYS., EDS. *Essentials of Complementary and Alternative Medicine*. Philadelphia, PA.: Lippincott Williams & Wilkins, c1999. WB 890 E78 1999.

#### JOURNALS

*Journals of Alternative and Complementary Medicine*. Available at HML.

## **Medical Journals and Advertisers It's a Great Team and We Will Continue to Play the Game**

At a recent annual meeting of the International Committee of Medical Journal Editors, new guidelines about Journal advertisements and editorials supporting these policies were proposed. The proposals are to be published in September in the New England Journal of Medicine, Lancet, Journal of the American Medical Association, Annals of Internal Medicine as well as the National Society Journals of Canada, the Netherlands, Norway, Australia and New Zealand.

Essentially, the new rules will require that the authors of studies have control over the content of reports submitted for Journal publication, and that the authors have access to all data available to the pharmaceutical companies.

Most Hawaii physicians at least know the procedures, even if they themselves may not have been directly involved with pharmaceutical company sponsored research. Drug companies contract with physicians or medical institutions to perform clinical or basic science studies. The physician is to be independent of the sponsor and submit conclusions, even if it is not necessarily in the company's financial interest. Frequently the drug company helps conduct the study, compiles the research in vast computer databases and may even help write about the findings for publication.

The Committee of Medical Journal Editors is concerned about studies conducted and submitted when the pharmaceutical company does not provide the authors complete access to the data. These are not frequent situations. Most reputable drug companies want "the whole truth and nothing but the truth" in their reports and sponsored publications.

There have been only three or four well-known egregious examples and some less well-known cases in which companies tried to block publication of unfavorable studies or tried to put a positive spin on the results, according to Frank Davidoff, M.D., past editor for the Annals of Internal Medicine. These rare instances do, unfortunately, hit the media headlines and TV news reports, but the vast majority of pharmaceutical sponsors are ethical, honest, and want accurate reports. They are also very aware that the FDA is closely observing their actions.

Medical journals need the pharmaceutical industry. We cannot publish peer-reviewed top quality manuscripts without the support of drug companies. And the drug companies need honest evaluations and reports by respected, authoritative, established researchers and practicing physicians.